242 Communist regime, the Communists assert, has provided the farmers with modern farming implements, a quantity of seeds of good quality, and bean cake and chemical fertilizers. Methods have been developed to combat locust invasions, which have plagued China for more than 2,500 years.[26] In 1951, locusts swarmed over 15 million acres in Hopei and neighboring provinces; in 1952, locusts swarmed on an additional 3 million acres, destroying crops. The Communists organized teams of peasants and equipped them with benzine hexachloride powder, other insecticides, and equipment. In 1953, planes were used to spray the crops. The Communists assert that the threat of locusts no longer plague the Chinese farmer.[27]

•407 If the Chinese farmer has been furnished with modern farm implements -- or has the use of such instruments, owned by the local producers' co-operative or mutual-aid team -- there is a possibility that efficiency has increased as the Communists insist. It has been reported that the North China Agricultural Machinery Works, on the outskirts of Peking,

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26. People's China, Peking, Sept. 1, 1953, p. 26.

27. Ibid., p. 27.

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407 is manufacturing many types of farm implements, including horse-drawn ploughs, cultivators, reapers, rice-threshers, corn shellers, silage cutters, water wheels, and water pumps, which are first tested in the fields before being produced in quantity.[28] The new plough, it is reported, is light, ploughs deeper, does a better job of turning up the soil, and is easier to handle than the old. It can aid in increasing crop yields from 16 per cent to 44 per cent. The three-bladed cultivator can weed four times as fast as the hoe, and the mechanical reaper is twenty times as efficient as the sickle. Of course these reports of increased efficiency are derived from a Communist source.[29]

248 The so-called "advanced Soviet method" used in the close-planting of cotton is now practiced in North China as in other regions, according to Communist reports.[30] For example, the Communists say that Shuangchiao State Farm, in the eastern suburbs of Peking, harvested between 20 per cent and 30 per cent more cotton when the number of cotton plants per hectare were increased from 30,000

28. Ibid., p. 28.
29. Ibid., July 1, 1954, p. 25.
30. Ibid., Feb. 16, 1954, p. 18.